

Bellevue Police Department



Auto Prowl Prevention

Thefts from cars is one of the most common crimes police respond to. It is a crime of opportunity that occurs everywhere. You can help reduce the risk of becoming a victim by practicing good preventative measures in order to make your car less desirable to the criminal.

Why do people steal from cars?

Cars are easy targets for thieves. They are generally looking for valuables which they can sell, pawn, or trade for either money or drugs. They are also looking for paperwork which can be used to facilitate additional crimes such as fraud, forgery, and identity theft.

Where are cars most vulnerable?

Thieves tend to target vehicles that are parked in places where they are likely to be left unattended for an extended period of time. This includes places like shopping centers, movie theaters, schools, park and rides, and trail heads.

What is the number one prevention tip that can help reduce auto prowls?

Hide your valuables out of site. If your car appears to be empty, the thief likely leave your car alone and move on to another.

What do I do if my car is prowled?

You should report it immediately to the jurisdiction where the theft occurred. If the crime occurred in the City of Bellevue, a police officer will respond in order to take the report and to process your vehicle for fingerprints in an attempt to identify the suspect.

Auto Prowl Prevention Tips

- When leaving your vehicle, lock all the doors and roll up all the windows.
- Hide your valuables out of sight.
- If you place your valuables in the trunk, try and do it at a location where no one will see you do it. This may require you to re-park if you are in the middle of a shopping spree.
- Parking strategies
 - * Park in well lit areas.
 - * Park where there is high pedestrian traffic.
 - * Park in lots with parking attendants.
- Use your alarm.
- Consider purchasing a security alarm system that is not only audible, but has the ability to page you if the alarm is activated.
- Park inside your garage.
- If you are unable to park inside a garage at night, consider installing motion sensor lighting that can illuminate your vehicle and the area around it when activated.
- Record the serial numbers of all valuables routinely used or left inside the vehicle. This includes stereos, amplifiers, radar detectors, GPS units, and cellular telephones.

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Crime Prevention Unit

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